

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1248

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON MILI NATO AWACS DA

SUBJECT: AWACS MEETING IN COPENHAGEN

SUMMARY: THE DOD AWACS BRIEFING TEAM ENCOUNTERED A TYPICALLY HOSPITABLE, EXCEPTIONALLY QUALIFIED BUT STILL RESISTANT GROUP OF DANISH DEFENSE PERSONNEL MONDAY, APRIL 12, AT THE DEFENSE STAFF HEADQUARTERS. THE BRIEFING WAS WELL RECEIVED, BUT SUBSEQUENT COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REFLECTED CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO DANISH INVOLVEMENT.

1. THE DANISH AUDIENCE, IN TERMS OF KEY DECISION MAKERS AND HIGH RANKING DEFENSE OFFICERS, REFLECTED THE DANISH HIGH LEVEL INTEREST IN THE MOUNTING QUESTION OF AWACS FOR DENMARK. THE AUDIENCE INCLUDED HIGH RANKING CHIEF OF DEFENSE AND MINISTRY PERSONNEL PLUS IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF THE MATERIEL, LOGISTICS AND RESEARCH STAFFS. THIS SIGNIFICANT ATTENDANCE LIST, DURING THE SCANDINAVIAN EASTER HOLIDAY WEEK, INDICATES THE IMPORTANCE THE DANES
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PLACE IN THEIR OBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF A COMMITMENT TO

AWACS AND REFLECTS THEIR SELF-IMPOSED REQUIREMENT TO OBTAIN ALL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE SUBJECT OF AWACS.

2. THE INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF THE DANISH HOSTS REFLECTED THEIR PREVIOUS POSITIONS IN DEFENSE, THAT ALTHOUGH THEY FEEL ALL THE INFORMATION THEY REQUIRED ON AWACS WAS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THEM, THEY STILL WELCOMED THE DOD TEAM. THE DANES LISTENED VERY ATTENTIVELY TO A MOST PROFESSIONAL BRIEFING BY GENERAL RALPH, MR. WILKINSON AND COLONEL GILSTER WHICH CONTINUED UNINTERRUPTED FOR ONE HOUR AND THIRTY MINUTES. FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING, MAJOR GENERAL LIND, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS FOR THE DEFENSE STAFF, POSED THE FIRST QUESTIONS AND MADE THE FIRST OBSERVATIONS. HIS INCISIVE OBSERVATION WAS THAT IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT POSSIBLY THE ROLE OF AWACS HAD ASSUMED AN ADDITIONAL MISSION OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT AS OPPOSED TO THE INITIAL PURPOSE OF EARLY WARNING. FURTHER, HE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE STAFF REITERATED THE BASIC RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE SYSTEM CONCERNING SURVIVABILITY AND POSED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF AWACS ON FUTURE NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR OTHER RADAR PROGRAMS. GENERAL LIND FURTHER QUESTIONED THE CREW COMPOSITION AND COMMAND AND CONTROL OF THE SYSTEM BY THE THEATER COMMANDERS. IN OUR JUDGMENT, THE ONLY UNIQUE ASPECT OF THE PROGRAM THAT SURFACED FROM THE DANISH POINT OF VIEW WAS THE INTEREST EXPRESSED BY GENERAL LIND IN THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT ASPECT OF THE ROLE OF AWACS IN FUTURE OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS. ALL OTHER QUESTIONS REFLECTED RESTATEMENTS OF DANISH DEFENSE POSITION IN OPPOSITION TO THE SYSTEM BASED UPON THEIR EVALUATION THAT IT DOES NOT SERVE THEIR PURPOSES IN TERMS OF DETECTION OF ENEMY LOW-LEVEL ATTACKS.

3. THE COST-SHARING ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM WERE DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH. HOWEVER, THERE APPEARED NO WARM RECEPTION TO THE PROPOSITION THAT DENMARK DEMONSTRATE NATO SOLIDARITY AND A FIRM COMMITMENT TO NATO BY PROVIDING 2.4 PERCENT OF THE LIFE CYCLE COSTS OF THE SYSTEM. AS GENERAL LIND POINTED OUT IN HIS INITIAL

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REMARKS, THE DANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE F-16 PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A FIRM COMMITMENT TO NATO SOLIDARITY, INTEROPERABILITY AND STANDARDIZATION BY THE DANES.

4. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THE DANISH DEFENSE OPPOSITION TO AWACS HAS NOT CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY AS A RESULT OF THIS BRIEFING. WE PERCEIVE THAT THE DANES HESITATE

TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENT TO AWACS IN PRINCIPLE FOR FEAR THAT SUCH A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT WOULD RESULT IN A REQUEST FOR A MONETARY CONTRIBUTION WHICH THEY CONTEND THEY ARE NOT NOW ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE. ALTHOUGH THE COST-SHARING PROPOSALS CERTAINLY REFLECTED A REQUEST FOR TOKEN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYSTEM, THE ACTUAL DOLLAR VALUES REFLECTED IN THOSE PROPOSALS MADE MANY IN ATTENDANCE SWALLOW NOTICEABLY HARD. EVEN THOUGH THE BRIEFERS CLEARLY EXPLAINED THAT THE DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION WAS COMPLETELY NEGOTIABLE, AND THAT EVEN A VERY SMALL TOKEN CONTRIBUTION WOULD REFLECT NATO SOLIDARITY, DANES FEEL THAT ANY POSITIVE ACTION AT THIS TIME, EVEN IF SMALL, OPENS THE DOOR FOR FUTURE FINANCIAL SUPPORT REQUESTS WHICH THEY THEN WOULD FEEL THEY WERE COMMITTED TO MEET.

5. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE UNWAVERING OPPOSITION OF THE DEFENSE STAFF DID NOT NOTICEABLY CHANGE AS A RESULT OF THIS BRIEFING. HOWEVER, DUE TO THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF THE AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE, AND THE PRESENCE OF KEY DOD PERSONNEL, THERE MAY BE SOME GLIMMER OF HOPE WHEN THE MOMENTUM OF THE PROGRAM BEGINS TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN DENMARK. IT IS OUR INTENT TO ALLOW TIME FOR THE BREADTH OF THE SUBJECT AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO DENMARK TO FILTER THROUGH THE MOD:CHODEN STAFFS, THEN RE-OPEN THE QUESTIONS AMONG THEM AGAIN TO DETERMINE IF, IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN ANY DEFINITIVE CHANGE TO THE PREVIOUS OPPOSITION TO AWACS. THIS REACTION, OR LACK OF IT, WILL BE REPORTED WHEN DETERMINED.

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